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NATO CONFIDENTIAL FROM WASHINGTON

POLITICAL ANALYSIS: US-USSR RELATIONS: MOSCOW'S DUAL
APPROACH

1. MOSCOW CLEARLY BELIEVES IT CAN SUCCESSFULLY COMPART-
MENTALIZE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE US, SEPARATING THE STATE-
TO-STATE FROM ITS OTHER SPHERES OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY.
IMPLICIT IN THAT VIEW IS A SOVIET ASSESSMENT THAT THE US-
USSR BALANCE OF FORCES NOW COMPELS THE US TO ACCEPT THESE
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SAME GROUND RULES FOR CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

SOVIET MEDIA HANDLING OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S RECENT MOSCOW VISIT AND OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON ANGOLA PROVIDES A VIVID ILLUSTRATION OF THAT DUALITY.

2. SECRETARY'S MOSCOW VISIT: OVERRIDING CONCERNS: MOSCOW HAS CONSISTENTLY PORTRAYED THE FORD ADMINISTRATION AS:

(A)--FAVORING DETENTE AND IMPROVEMENT OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS;

(B)--ACCEPTING THE VIEW THAT IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS WILL CONTINUE;

(C)--BEING PRESSURED DOMESTICALLY BY SUCH FORCES AS THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND RIGHT-WING ELEMENTS IN CONGRESS WHO ARE OPPOSED TO DETENTE; BUT

(D)--PLACING SUCH BASIC ISSUES AS PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR, THE TOUCHSTONE OF DETENTE, ABOVE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS.

3. CONSISTENT WITH THIS LINE, THE SOVIET MEDIA TREATED THE SECRETARY'S JANUARY 20-23 MOSCOW VISIT IN A STRAIGHT-FORWARD, POSITIVE FASHION, WITH STRESS ON ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS AND FOR CONTINUING DETENTE. CONVERSELY, PESSIMISTIC ACCOUNTS ABOUT SALT PROSPECTS IN US MEDIA WERE DISMISSED AS THE WORK OF DETENTE OPPONENTS. COMMENTARY FOLLOWING THE VISIT, HOWEVER, SYSTEMATICALLY HIGHLIGHTED THE THEMES THAT:

(A)--BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY EVALUATED THE VISIT AS HAVING CONTRIBUTED TOWARD RESOLVING SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES IN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS;

(B)--BOTH SIDES HAD AGREED TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE REMAINING ISSUES IN ORDER TO REACH AGREEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE;

(C)--THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN MOSCOW GAVE FRESH IMPETUS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND CONTRIBUTED TO DETENTE.

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4. MORE RECENTLY, IZVESTIYA (JANUARY 31) NOTED THAT THE SOVIET DELEGATION IN GENEVA FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE SALT TALKS WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS IN A "BUSINESSLIKE SPIRIT," IN ORDER TO REACH MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE DECISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE "CONSTRUCTIVE RESULTS" OF THE MOSCOW TALKS. PRAVDA'S COMMENTATOR KOLESNICHENKO THE FOLLOWING DAY CITED US PRESS ACCOUNTS

OF "IMPORTANT NEW IDEAS" ADVANCED BY THE SOVIETS AT THE MOSCOW TALKS AND NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY "POSSIBLY" WOULD REVISIT THE SOVIET UNION IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR THE SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS STILL OUTSTANDING.

5. ANGOLA AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS: AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS HAVE DISCOUNTED ALL WARNINGS BY THE US

THAT THEIR ACTIONS IN ANGOLA COULD STRAIN DETENTE AND HAVE, ON THE CONTRARY, INSISTED THAT THE ENTIRE ANGOLAN AFFAIR HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH DETENTE AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE SAME FEBRUARY 1 PRAVDA THAT LAUDED THE SECRETARY'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN MOSCOW MADE ONE OF THE MOST DIRECT PERSONAL ATTACKS AGAINST HIM TO DATE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS TESTIMONY ON ANGOLA TO THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA. IT:

(A)--DISMISSED AS A "COCK-AND-BULL STORY" HIS ASSERTION THAT SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS ARE THREATENED BY ANGOLA;

(B)--DISAVOWED HIS ACCUSATION OF SOVIET EXPANSIONIST AIMS THERE; AND

(C)--REBUTTED THE CONTENTION THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS NO HISTORIC INTERESTS IN THE REGION BY ARGUING THAT SUCH INTERESTS EXIST BY VIRTUE OF THE "FULL AND CONSISTENT SUPPORT" THE SOVIET UNION HAS GIVEN TO THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE IN THEIR LONG STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.

6. PRAVDA ALSO CLAIMED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS DISTORTING SOVIET AND CUBAN POLICY IN ANGOLA TO JUSTIFY ITS OWN SUPPORT FOR ANGOLAN "REBELS." IN DOING SO THE PAPER ABANDONED THE RESTRAINT USUALLY SHOWN BY SOVIET MEDIA AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PERSONALLY ATTACKED THE PRESIDENT, ALBEIT LESS ACIDULOUSLY THAN IT DID THE SECRETARY.

7. A KOLESNICHENKO RADIO MOSCOW COMMENTARY, FEBRUARY 3, PURSUED THE SAME ARGUMENT, IF IN SOMEWHAT MORE MODERATED LANGUAGE. AFTER REVIEWING THE LONG-TERM NATURE OF SOVIET AID TO MPLA, KOLESNICHENKO SAID IT WOULD BE "TOO PRIMITIVE" TO LINK EVENTS IN ANGOLA TO THE COURSE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. USING THE IDEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT THAT EVERY NATION HAS THE RIGHT TO BUILD ITS OWN FUTURE ITS OWN WAY, HE DENIED THAT RELATIONS WITH THE US COULD THEREBY BE DAMAGED AND GAVE AS EXAMPLES THE SOCIALIST PATH FOLLOWED BY TANZANIA AND ZAMBIA, WHICH HAD NO EFFECT ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS.

8. INITIAL SOVIET REACTION TO THE SECRETARY'S FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH IN SAN FRANCISCO, FEBRUARY 3, WAS MORE EXPLICIT. TASS ON FEBRUARY 4 LAUDED THE SECRETARY FOR HIS REALISTIC RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR DETENTE, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING SOVIET-AMERICAN UNDERSTANDINGS, AND A CONTINUATION OF DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, IT SAW IN THE SPEECH ANOTHER LINE--"AN ATTEMPT TO DISTORT THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION." CLAIMING THAT THE SECRETARY IGNORED THE ACTUAL STATE OF

AFFAIRS, THAT IS, THE USSR'S PEACE POLICY, TASS ACCUSED HIM OF ATTEMPTING TO JUSTIFY AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA BY SPEAKING OF SOVIET "EXPANSION" AND "AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS." IN BRIEF, THE US SECRETARY WAS ALLEGEDLY "TRYING TO TURN THE FACTS UPSIDE DOWN."

9. RADIO MOSCOW'S "INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE" OF FEBRUARY 8 SIMILARLY JUXTAPOSED APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON SALT AND DETENTE WITH CRITICISM OF HIS STAND ON ANGOLA.

10. SOVIET MOTIVATIONS: VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS MAY BE OFFERED FOR MOSCOW'S SHOW OF POLITICAL SCHIZOPHRENIA. THEY INCLUDE THAT THE SOVIETS

(A)--REALLY BELIEVE THEY CAN CREDIBLY PURSUE DETENTE IN STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS ON SUCH ISSUES AS SALT, WHILE CONFIDENTIAL

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PROMOTING REVOLUTIONARY CAUSES UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF AN IDEOLOGY THAT JUSTIFIES THEIR EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE "SOCIAL STATUS QUO" ELSEWHERE;

(B)--ASSESS THE US ADMINISTRATION IN THE POST-VIETNAM PERIOD AS BEING CONSTRAINED BY CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC REACTION FROM MOUNTING ANY EFFECTIVE COUNTERACTIONS; AND

(C)--HENCE, THEIR OWN WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN A NEW-STYLE GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY, WITH A CLIENT STATE AS PROXY, RELATES DIRECTLY TO THEIR ESTIMATE OF US INABILITY TO RESPOND.

EVEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION POLITICS, THE SOVIETS APPARENTLY REMAIN CONVINCED THAT SUCH UNDERTAKINGS AS ANGOLA CAN BE CONTAINED AS LOCAL DISTURBANCES, HOPEFULLY OF SHORT-TERM DURATION AND WITHOUT LASTING IMPACT ON US-USSR TIES.

11. THIS APPROACH TO RELATIONS WITH THE US BRINGS INTO SHARPER FOCUS MOSCOW'S CONTINUED PURSUIT OF ITS MAIN FOREIGN POLICY GOALS ALONG DUAL LINES:

(A)--THE AVOIDANCE OF CONFRONTATION AND PRAGMATIC WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ON ISSUES OF OVERRIDING CONCERN TO BOTH SIDES, SUCH AS SALT; AS WELL AS

(B)--A WILLINGNESS TO ENCOUNTER GREATER RISKS IN AREAS WHERE IT BELIEVES IT CAN ENHANCE ITS POSITION AS LEADER OF THE "WORLD LIBERATION MAINSTREAM" WHILE ISOLATING THE US AS THE LEADER OF "WORLD IMPERIALISM" AND DEMONSTRATING US INABILITY TO BLOCK THE COURSE OF CHANGE IN THE THIRD WORLD.

12. AT THE SAME TIME, OUR READING OF SOVIET POLICY ALSO SUGGESTS AN AWARENESS BY THE LEADERSHIP THAT ITS FREEDOM OF MANEUVER TO PURSUE THIS DUAL LINE IS NOT UNLIMITED. BUT UNTIL MOSCOW IS CONVINCED THAT THE LIMITS ARE REAL, IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO SEEK CONSTANTLY TO PROBE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PERMISSIBLE. INGERSOLL

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